

Message Text

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UNCLAS STATE 176510

FOR DEPUTY SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER FROM BRIZILL

FOLLOWING REPEAT MSG FROM COMUSKOREA/SEOUL/KS/PAJ-P1 SENT
ACTION CINCPAC HONOLULU HI/J74, SECDEF WASHDC/ASD-PA
RPTD INFO SECSTATE, DA WASHDC/SAPA-PI, CDR ONE CORPS
(ROK/US) GP UIJONGBU KS, CDR TWO INK DIV TONGDUCHON KS
(PAO), AMEMBASSY TOKYO(PAO), COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA(PAO)
P 261250Z JULY 77

QUOTE: UNCLAS

SUBJECT: JOINT SECDEF, MND PRESS CONFERENCE
FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT SEC DEF/MND ON THE RECORD
PRESS CONFERENCE AFTER 10TH SCM CLOSED 26 JULY 1977
IN SEOUL KOREA:
MND SUH,S STATEMENT: WE HAVE DISCUSSED THE ASPECTF OF WITH-
DRAWAL OF U.S. GROUND FORCES FROM KOREA AND THE SECURITY OF KOREA
FOR THE PAST TWO DAYS. WE HAVE EXCHANGED OUR VIEWS FRANKLY, PRO-
MOTING MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING. AS A RESULT, WE HAVE AGREED TO TAKE
CONSTRUCTIVE AND SUBSTANTIVE COMPLEMENTARY MEASURES. WE FOCUSED
ON THE POSSIBILITY OF NORTH KOREAN MISCALCULATION, WHICH CANNOT BE
RULED OUT COMPLETELY. WE REAFFIRMED OUR DETB MINATION TO RESOLUTE
LY RESPOND TOGETHER TO ANY NORTH KOREAN PROVOCATION, IN THIS SENSE
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I CONSIDER THIS MEETING HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL AND USEFUL.
WOULD YOU LIKE, MR. SECRETARY, TO SAY A FEW WORDS?
SEC DEFS OPENING STATEMENT: THANK YOU MR. MINISTER.
THE MOST IMPORTANT RESULT, AS I SEE IT, OF THIS 10TH ANNUAL REPUBLIC
OF KOREA - UNITED STATES SECURITY CONSULTATIVE MEETING, WAS THE RE-
ITERATION OF THE JOINT COMMITMENT TO SECURITY OF THE REPUBLIC OF
KO EA, UNDER THE MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY. THAT COMMITMENT WAS UNDER
LINED BY, AND REFERED TO, IN THE LETTER FROM PRESIDENT CARTER WHICH
I DELIVERED TO PRESIDENT PARK. WITH THAT AS A STARTING POINT, OUR
TALKS DURING THE PAST TWO DAYS HAVE BEGUN A CONSULTATIVE PROCESS

WHICH WILL CONTINUE DURING THE FOUR OR FIVE YEAR PERIOD DURING WHICH U.S. GROUND COMBAT FORCES WILL BE WITHDRAWN, AND WILL CONTINUE BEYOND THAT. THIS IS PART OF A WIDER CONSULTATIVE PROCESS. WE WILL BE CONSULTING WITH THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT AND WE WILL BE CONSULTING, MOST OF ALL, ON SPECIFIC MATTERS OF EQUIPMENT AND SALES WITH THE U.S. CONGRESS. WITHIN THAT FRAMEWORK WE'VE AGREED ON A NUMBER OF SPECIFIC ISSUES AND ITEMS. I WON'T DETAIL THEM BECAUSE THEY ARE CONTAINED IN THE COMMUNIQUE WHICH IS BEING ISSUED TODAY. I WILL SAY ONE MORE GENERAL THING, AND THAT IS IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT THE KOREAN PEOPLE UNDERSTAND, AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE UNDERSTAND AND THAT ALL OTHER NATIONS UNDERSTAND, THAT IT IS THE FIRM INTENTION OF THE UNITED STATES TO CONTINUE AS A MAJOR POWER IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC AND EAST ASIA. OUR CONTINUED MILITARY DEPLOYMENTS IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE WESTERN PACIFIC WILL SUPPORT THAT ROLE. AND IT'S WITH THAT ROLE THAT THE GRADUAL WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. GROUND FORCES -- U.S. GROUND COMBAT FORCES FROM KOREA, AND THE CORRESPONDING BUILDUP OF KOREAN CAPABILITIES, WILL TAKE PLACE. AT THE END OF THAT PERIOD I HAVE EVERY EXPECTATION THAT THE SECURITY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA WILL BE PRESERVED AND INDEED ENHANCED.

TRANSLATOR: MR. SECRETARY, SIR, MR. YOU FROM THE KYUNGHYANG SHINMOON, ONE OF THE DAILY NEWSPAPER COMPANIES IN SEOUL. AS HE RECALLS, BACK IN 1975 DURING THE 8TH ANNUAL ROK-US SECURITY CONSULTATIVE MEETING, THEN U.S. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE DR. SCHLESINGER INDICATED THAT

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HE WOULD EMPLOY TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS IF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA IS ATTACKED BY

THE OTHER SIDE. AND ALSO, BACK IN 1976 DURING THE 9TH SCM, SECRETARY OF DEFENSE RUMSFELD STATED THAT HE WOULD FOLLOW HIS PREDECESSORS POLICY AS FAR AS THAT (PARTICULAR) MATTER GOES. AND ALSO, PRESIDENT CARTER IN RECENT MONTHS IN HIS INTERVIEW WITH US NEWS AND WORLD REPORT, INDICATED THAT THE U.S. MAY EMPLOY TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS IF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA IS ATTACKED BY THE OTHER SIDE. AND ALSO HE INDICATED THAT SINCE THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA IS A MEMBER OF THE NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY KOREA WILL BE PROTECTED BY A U.S. NUCLEAR UMBRELLA. AND IS THAT, THE CASE, WOULD YOU, WOULD THE US EMPLOY TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS, HAVE YOU ANY CHANGE IN POLICY? OR WOULD YOU WITHDRAW ALL OF THE NUCLEAR WEAPONS, OR WOULD YOU CONTINUE TO RETAIN NUCLEAR WEAPONS ON THE PENINSULA? HE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE COMPREHENSIVE COMMENTS ON THAT.

SEC DEF: THE COMPREHENSIVE NATURE OF THE QUESTION, I THINK, ALLOWS ME TO MAKE A SELECTIVE RESPONSE. WITHOUT CHARACTERIZING WHAT HAS BEEN SAID IN THE PAST, AND I'M NOT SURE THAT THE QUESTION QUOTES THEM ACCURATELY, I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING REMARKS. THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA IS, AND WILL BE, WILL CONTINUE TO BE PROTECTED BY THE U.S. NUCLEAR UMBRELLA. AT THE SAME TIME, THE UNITED STATES ITS RESPONSIBLE OFFICIALS, AND SPECIFICALLY MYSELF, DO NOT TAKE THE USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS OR THE POTENTIAL PROSPECTIVE USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS LIGHTLY. THEY ARE AN EXTREME MEASURE, THEIR USE IS AN EXTREME MEASURE, WHICH IS VERY UNLIKELY TO PROMOTE THE SURVIVAL EITHER OF THOSE WHO USE THEM, OR THOSE AGAINST WHOM THEY MIGHT BE USED. I WILL NOT COMMENT ON THE PRESENCE OR ABSENCE OF U.S.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN KOREA OR ANY OTHER SPECIFIC AREA. THAT HAS BEEN AND REMAINS A UNITED STATES POLICY, NOT TO COMMENT ON LOCATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS. I BELIEVE THAT THE REPUBLIC KOREA CAN BE DEFENDED AGAINST AGGRESSION BY CONVENTIONAL MEANS, ITS OWN FORCES AND U.S. FORCES. THOSE U.S. FORCES AT PRESENT AT PRESENT INCLUDE GROUND COMBAT FORCES. THEY WILL IN THE FUTURE CONTINUE TO INCLUDE AIR FORCES, WHICH WE WILL IN FACT AUGMENT SOMEWHAT, AND NAVAL FORCES, LOGISTIC SUPPORT, INTELLIGENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT. AND THERE ARE, AND WILL CONINUE TO BE IN THE FUTURE, OTHER U.S.FORCES AVAIL-
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ABLE FOR RAPID DEPLOYMENT HERE IF NECESSARY. SINCE WE ARE WITHDRAW-
ING OVER A PERIOD OF 3 TO 5, 4 OR 5 YEARS OUR GROUND COMBAT FORCES, WE BELIEVE IT NECESSARY TO HELP THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA AUGMENT ITS OWN CAPABILITIES. AND WE BELIEVE THAT BY DOING SO OVER THAT PERIOD WE WILL BE ABLE TO ASSURE A LEVEL OF MILITARY CAPABILITY, OF DEFENSE CAPABILITY, ADEQUATE TO DETERAND IF NECESSARY, TO DEFEAT AGGRESSION. THE NECLEAR UMBRELLA WILL REMAIN IN FORCE BECAUSE THE U.S. WILL CONT-
INUE TO HAVE AVILABLE IN THE, IN EVERY AREA OF THE WORK, THE CAPABILI
TY OF NUCLEAR WEAPON DEPLOYMENT. BUT I THINK IT IS A MISTAKE TO
DEPEND ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS TO PROTECT THE COUNTRY WHEN, AS IN THIS
CASE, NON-NUCLEAR CAPABILITY WILL SUFFICE.

Q: MY NAME IS KRISHER, NEWSWEEK MAGAZINE. IN THE COMMUNIQUE IT IS
STATED THAT YOU AGREED THAT COMPENSATORY MEASURES WILL BE IMPLEMENT-
ED IN ADVANCE OF OR IN PARALLEL

WITH THE WITHDRAWALS. IN THE EVENT THAT CONGRESS SHOULD NOT COME
THROUGH WITH THE COMPENSATIONS, WITH THE ALLOCATIONS NECESSARY FOR
THE COMPENSATIONS IN TIME, IS THERE A POSSIBILITY THAT THE WITH-
DRAWALS MIGHT BE DELAYED, POSTPONED, OR CANCELLED? AND I WOULD LIKE
TO ASK SECRETARY SUH WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT OF KOREA HAS ANY CONCERN
OVER THIS MATTER?

SECRETARY BROWN: I HAVE A TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR THOSE WITHDRAWALS
BEGINNING WITH THE WITHDRAWAL OF 6,000, INCLUDING ONE BRIGADE OF THE
2ND DIVISION BY THE END OF 1978, AND THE REST OF THE WITHDRAWALS ARE
LESS FIRM IN DETAIL. WE DO, HOWEVER, STILL PLAN TO COMPLETE WITH-
DRAWALS OF GROUND COMBAT FORCES WITHIN FOUR OR FIVE YEARS. AS YOU
INDICATE, THERE WILL BE A PARALLEL IMPLEMENTATION OF MEASURES TO
IMPROVE REPUBLIC OF KOREA CAPABILITIES SO AS TO ASSURE THEIR CONIN-
UED SECURITY. WE EXPECT BOTH OF THESE TO GO FORWARD, WE WILL BE
CONSULTING WITH THE CONGRESS AND I HAVE CONFIDENCE, THAT WITH SOME
ADJUSTMENTS WHICH WILL COME OUT OF THE CONSULTATIONS WITH CONGRESS
ANDWHICH WILL COMEOUT OF FURTHER DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN OURSELVES AND
THE OFFICIALS OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH KOREA, THAT THIS CAN BE
CARRIED FORWARD.
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SECRETARY SUH: AS PRESIDENT CARTER MADE IT CLEAR SO MANY TIMES, THE
WITHDRAWAL OF THE U.S. GROUND FORCES FROM KOREA WILL BE IMPLEMENTED
IN SUCH A WAY NOT TO DESTABILIZE THE MILITARY BALANCE, SO AS TO
PRESERVE PEACE AND SECURITY ON THE KOREAN PENNINSULA. IN CASE THERE

IS ANY PROVOCATION BY NORTH KOREA, WE WILL BE PROVIDED WITH DETERRENCE. SINCE PRESIDENT CARTER MENTIONED THAT THIS WITHDRAWAL WILL BE EFFECTED GRADUALLY AND CAREFULLY, I THINK THIS IS THE BASIC U.S. POLICY AS FAR AS OUR UNDERSTANDING GOES. AS MR. SECRETARY, SECRETARY BROWN MENTIONED, ALL COMPENSATORY MEASURES WILL TAKE PLACE IN ADVANCE OF OR IN PARALLEL WITH THE WITHDRAWAL.

BUT THIS WILL TAKE PLACE SO AS NOT TO ADVERSELY EFFECT THE MILITARY BALANCE. THIS IS THE WAY WE UNDERSTAND AND THIS COMMITMENT WILL BE FACT. THIS IS WHAT WE BELIEVE.

Q: I AM MR. LEE OF THE TONGYAN BROADCASTING COMPANY. IN THE LAST YEAR OR SO, LT. GEN. HOLLINGSWORTH, CG, I CORPS (ROK-U.S.) GROUP THEN INDICATED THAT HE WOULD IMPLEMENT A NINE DAY WAR ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA. AND ALSO, MR. LEE UNDERSTANDS THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD COMMIT, OR INTERVENE IN THE KOREAN AFFAIRS PROMPTLY, AS SOON AS THE ROK IS ATTACKED BY THE OTHER SIDE. ALSO, THIS COMMITMENT IS BASED ON THE MUTUAL DEFENSE AGREEMENT PACT ESTABLISHED BACK IN 1954. AND ALSO, HE UNDERSTANDS THAT THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES CAN WAGE A WAR FOR A 60 DAYS PERIOD WITHOUT CONGRESSIONAL RATIFICATION OR APPROVAL. IF THAT IS THE CASE, WOULD THE UNITED STATES COMMIT TROOPS OR INTERVENE IN THE KOREAN WAR PROMPTLY IF WE'RE ATTACKED BY THE NORTH?

SECRETARY BROWN: THE UNITED STATES WOULD OBSERVE ITS OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY. IT WOULD RESPOND PROMPTLY TO AGGRESSION AGAINST SOUTH KOREA.

QUESTION: I AM LEE TAI FANG OF THE CENTRAL NEWS AGENCY(CNA) FROM THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA. ACCORDING TO THE JOINT STATEMENT TODAY, THE UNITED STATES MADE A VERY CONFIRMED SECURITY COMMITMENT TO THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA. THE UNITED STATES, FIRM COMMITMENT MADE ME RECALL THAT BEFORE THE FALLING OF VIETNAM, THE U.S. MADE A REPEATED AND FIRM SECURITY COMMITMENT TO THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT AND THE FREEDOM OF THE PEOPLE. AND, ANOTHER QUESTION IN CONNECTION WITH THAT. THAT UNITED STATES ALSO REPEATEDLY MADE A SECURITY COMMITMENT OF FREEDOM TO THE UNCLASSIFIED

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REPUBLIC OF CHINA. WHAT IS YOUR OPINION, SIR, AS OF THIS (??ANSWER??)

SECRETARY BROWN: THAT THE UNITED STATES OBSERVES ITS COMMITMENTS TO OTHER COUNTRIES, IS NOWHERE SHOWN MORE CLEARLY THAN IN THE CASE OF THE VIETNAM WAR. IT IS TESTIFIED TO BY THE TENS OF THOUSANDS OF AMERICAN DEAD AND HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF AMERICANS WOUNDED IN THAT WAR. IT IS TESTIFIED TO BY THE DEEP, PAINFUL, AND NOT YET HEALED WOUNDS ON THE AMERICAN BODY POLITIC FROM THAT WAR. SO I THINK THAT, SO LONG AS AN AMERICAN SECURITY COMMITMENT EXISTS, NO ONE SHOULD HAVE ANY DOUBTS ABOUT OUR WILLINGNESS, OUR INTENTION OF HONORING IT.

QUESTION: I AM FROM THE KOREA HERALD DAILY NEWSPAPER. AS FAR AS MR. SONG RECALLS OR KNOWS, THERE HAS BEEN NO OFFICIAL EXPLANATION AS TO WHY THE UNITED STATES IMPLEMENTED A WITHDRAWAL OF GROUND TROOPS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA. THE ONLY OBVIOUS REASON THE U.S. GOVERNMENT CITED WAS THE ECONOMIC GROWTH OF THIS NATION. IF THAT'S THE CASE, WHY WOULD YOU STILL HAVE TROOPS IN WESTERN EUROPE? IN COUNTRIES WHERE THEIR ECONOMY IS PROSPERING DAY BY DAY? AND ALSO, AS HE RECALLS, DURING THE LAST YEAR,S ROK-US SECURITY CONSULTATIVE MEETING, THE U.S. INDICATED THAT THERE WOULD BE NO PLANNED WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. TROOPS

FROM THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA. IF THAT'S THE CASE, DOES THIS MEAN A POLICY CHANGE OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT? OR IS THERE ANY OTHER REASON FOR THIS WITHDRAWAL? I FEEL IT WOULD BE WISE TO LET KNOW NOT ONLY KOREAN PEOPLE, BUT ALSO PEOPLE OF FRIENDLY ALLIES TO HAVE A LOGICAL RATIONAL OF THE WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. GROUND TROOPS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA.

SECRETARY BROWN: WITH RESPECT TO THE QUESTION ABOUT EUROPE, I WOULD POINT OUT THAT THE MILITARY CAPABILITY OF NORTH KOREA IS NOT COMPARABLE WITH THE MILITARY CAPABILITY OF THE SOVIET UNION AND THE WARSAW PACT FORCES. THE SITUATIONS ARE NOT COMPARABLE. INDEED, WITH RESPECT TO U.S. PLANS FOR GROUND FORCES IN KOREA, THERE HAS BEEN A CHANGE IN POLICY. I WOULD POINT OUT, HOWEVER, THAT AT THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE 7TH DIVISION IN 1970, THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PROPOSED WITHDRAWING THE 2ND DIVISION AS WELL IN 1973. MY PREDECESSOR, MR. LAIRD HAS SINCE CONFIRMED THAT HE MADE THAT RECOMMENDATION. AT THE TIME UNCLASSIFIED

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THAT THE 7TH DIVISION WAS WITHDRAWN, KOREA HAS TWO DIVISIONS IN VIETNAM WHICH HAVE LONG SINCE RETURNED. BEYOND THE IMPROVED ECONOMIC SITUATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA, WHICH HAS OF COURSE, GREATLY OUTSTRIPPED THAT OF NORTH KOREA, SOUTH KOREA HAS DOUBLE THE POPULATION AND ABOUT FOUR TIMES THE GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT, THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN NORTHEAST ASIA DIFFERS FROM WHAT IT WAS SOME YEARS AGO. THE SOVIET UNION AND CHINA ARE DIRECTING MOST OF THEIR MILITARY INTEREST AT EACH OTHER. BOTH OF THEM HAVE MADE CLEAR THAT THEY ARE NOT ENCOURAGERS OR INDEED SUPPORTERS OF NORTH KOREAN ADVENTURISM. THERE IS, I BELIEVE, A GOOD CHANCE OF STABILIZING THE SITUATION IN NORTHEAST ASIA OVER A PERIOD OF YEARS BY WITHDRAWING U.S. GROUND FORCES AND BY STRENGTHENING SOUTH KOREAN CAPABILITIES. THE VALUE OF THAT COMES IS OBVIOUS: IT WILL BE A MORE STABLE POLITICAL SITUATION IF THE BALANCE OF MILITARY POWER ON THE PENINSULA DOES NOT DEPEND, AS WE BELIEVE IT CAN BE CAUSED NOT TO DEPEND, UPON THE PRESENCE OF U.S. GROUND FORCES. THAT IS THE BASIS OF A CHANGE IN U.S. POLICY. IT WILL, HOWEVER, BE IMPLEMENTED GRADUALLY, INCREMENTALLY, AND WE WILL TAKE FULL ACCOUNT OF CHANGES THAT MAY TAKE PLACE IN THE MEANTIME. WE HAVE, AS THE COMMUNIQUE INDICATES, A PLAN TO RETAIN TWO BRIGADES AND THE DIVISION HEADQUARTERS OF THE 2ND DIVISION IN KOREA UNTIL THE FINAL WITHDRAWAL OF COMBATGROUND FORCES IN THE TIME FRAME OF FOUR OR FIVE YEARS FROM NOW.

QUESTION: I AM PETER WIENSTRAUB, FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW, WITH A QUESTION FOR MINISTER SUH. MR. MINISTER, DID YOUR PERCEPTIONS OF THE U.S. SERIOUSNESS OF THE U.S. COMMITMENT TO THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA AND THE RESOLVE BEHIND THAT COMMITMENT CHANGE MUCH IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS AND, IF SO, HOW?

MINISTER SUH: IT HAS BEEN SOME SIX MONTHS WITH THE NEW U.S. ADMINISTRATION IN. WITH THE NEW U.S. ADMINISTRATION IN, WE CAN THINK OF (THE) POSSIBILITY OF CHANGE IN ITS POLICY. AS A MATTER OF FACT, THE WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. GROUND FORCES FROM KOREA IS REGARDED AS A CHANGE IN THAT POLICY. BUT WE HAVE TO TAKE NOTE VERY SERIOUSLY THE FACTORS REMAINING UNCHANGED AS FAR AS RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA IS CONCERNED. FOR INSTANCE, THE U.S.

COMMITMENT TO DEFENSE OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA REMAINS UNCHANGED, AND
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U.S. IS FIRMLY COMMITTED TO THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF THE REPUBLIC
OF KOREA. THE UNITED STATES IS AS SERIOUSLY CONCERNED AS BEFORE ABOUT
THE MILITARY BALANCE EXISTING ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA AS WELL ITS
COMMITMENTS TO THE DEFENSE OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA. ON TOP OF THIS,
WE MUST SAY VERY PROUDLY THAT THE TRADITIONAL FR&IENDLY TIES BETWEEN
OUR COUNTRIES REMAINS FIRM AND UNCHANGED.
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